

40 Dudley Street
Reading, MA 01867
January 21, 2022

Honorable Judge George A. O'Toole
United States District Judge
1 Courthouse Way, Suite 2300
Boston, Massachusetts 02210

My name is Stacey Smith, and I am Aaron Smith's mother. Aaron is the youngest of my three children.

Aaron was a very loving, happy, sensitive and perceptive child. When Aaron was just 7 years old his father, Bill, was diagnosed with cancer, multiple myeloma. At the time of diagnosis, the life expectancy was three years. After the children were told of the diagnosis Aaron came to ask me his father was going to die. I told him I hoped he would not. His older brother and sister did not ask anything. We met with a social worker at Dana Farber to help us cope with this devastating diagnosis. Aaron unlike his siblings said he wanted to talk about feelings. Bill's course of treatment included high dose steroids which caused big mood swings. Bill would care for the children when I was at work as an ICU nurse. Eric the oldest of the three at 11 knew to call me at work if their father was not doing well. This was an incredibly difficult time for our family. I needed to work when Bill was not in the hospital. Bill did beat all expectations and lived 15 years after diagnosis. During that time there were numerous hospitalizations. Aaron's father's illness impacted Aaron more significantly than I realized.

During Bill's illness my mother was also having major health issues. As the nurse and oldest child, I was very involved in her care. She died in 2003. I tried my best to take care of everyone during that time in addition to financially supporting the family. I think Aaron assumed the role of the happy easy-going child. Aaron was dealing with incredible emotional trauma on his own.

Eric the oldest of my three children died by suicide while in the Army in 2006. I don't have words that can adequately convey how devastating his death was to the whole family.

Aaron left college after Eric died. He moved to Vermont in 2010. Aaron was reluctant to move because of his father's declining health. A few months after he moved, he was called home because his father was dying. Bill died October 2010. The third major loss in our family in only 7 years.

Aaron is incredibly intelligent, but he was not doing much with his life. At the time I thought he was smoking too much marijuana and drinking. Aaron agreed and I sent him to a rehab in 2012. He moved back to Massachusetts in 2013.

Aaron was arrested in 2019. He was released and moved home with me March 2020.

I have cherished this time with him. This time we have had together has been a gift. All the neighbors have been so happy he is home. I refer to Aaron as the Dali Aaron; he always can view things from all sides with no judgment. We have cooked meals together. Aaron and I have done some hiking together locally. We have celebrated holidays just the two of us and when COVID allowed with the family. He has been incredibly helpful to me. He has done work in and outside the house. He built an amazing, raised garden for me. Aaron has also done work for an elderly neighbor. Since he has been home, he got a job, purchased a car, gone to all his groups. Aaron has embraced everything that has been offered to him as part of his recovery and making amends. He has been going to school since September.

Aaron is now allowing the amazing human being he has always been shine. I don't have the words to describe what a joy it has been having him home. Aaron is such a support to me in so many ways. I have already lost a husband and son and the thought of Aaron going back to prison breaks my heart. He is my family. I will be as strong as I can if Aaron needs to go back to prison.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Respectfully,

Stacey Smith